

Resource Manual for Assessing and Treating Bilingual Clients

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

Colleen Siegfried

Thesis Advisor

Patricia Couch, M.A., CCC-SLP

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia A. Couch, M.A., CCC-SLP". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and 'C'.

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Abstract

With an increase in the Hispanic population in the United States, the prevalence of Spanish and English bilingual speakers is on the rise. The steps and processes in assessing and treating bilingual speech clients are more varied than those of an English-speaking client. In this manual, I have researched and compiled the appropriate steps for assessing and treating bilingual clients. I have also provided numerous resources for speech-language pathologists including bilingual letters for parents, bilingual worksheets for therapy, and common bilingual technology applications to be utilized in therapy.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Patricia Couch for her help and support on this project. Her guidance on this resource manual and in the classroom has significantly impacted my academic career.

I would like to thank my family for their continuing encouragement in my academic endeavors.

Author's Statement

The number of Spanish-speaking families in the United States has been steadily increasing, and as a result, the children and their parents are becoming bilingual out of necessity. Those that experience any type of speech disorder will be seeking therapy in a predominately English-speaking society. The process of assessing and treating a bilingual client can be challenging and is unlike any other kind of assessment or therapy due to a language barrier. As the number of bilingual English-Spanish speakers increases, so does the need for a resource manual of this kind. Because this number has grown rapidly, the therapy approaches and resources are still few and far between. This manual was developed out of the need to assist speech-language pathologists in their attempt to provide quality therapy to the bilingual population.

The goal of this Honors Thesis was to create a resource manual for practicing speech-languages pathologists to assess and treat bilingual speech errors, with a focus on English and Spanish bilingualism. This manual includes step-by-step instructions for assessing the potential client, implementing treatment strategies, and planning therapy activities that can be utilized in a therapeutic setting. This manual also includes the research documentation and charts to support each treatment approach and articulation goals. Additionally, it includes information explaining dialectal differences between the languages, developmental norms, and the phonological processes across both languages. The speech-language pathologist will also find "Handy Handouts" and other activities in both English and Spanish as helpful tips for parent education, which is vital for maximizing progress.

This project is not only a guide for implementing bilingual therapy, but will also be utilized in my career as a bilingual speech-language pathologist. The focus and research as a bilingual therapist was in choosing documents that fully represented each aspect of working in the clinical field. My undergraduate work in speech pathology emphasized the normal and delayed speech and language development of English speaking clients only. Therefore, research was required in order to select materials and strategies for both languages. Beginning with the first pages of the manual, clinicians will be able to obtain a case history, assess, and treat a client as they work through the material. A detailed case history, the first process of any therapy, is located in the beginning, followed chronologically by assessment, choosing an approach to therapy, establishing goals, and appropriate activities. Each reprinted document was carefully chosen to provide optimal information. The diagrams in the manual provide accurate information on the subject and each activity worksheet was selected in order to provide the most valuable experience for both the clinician and the client. These were chosen based on my clinical experience, interviews with practicing speech-language pathologists and bilingual educators, and extensive research into the most widely practiced approaches to therapy. The "Handy Handouts" were selected based on the most common questions asked by parents, as well as the most comprehensive information that clinicians share with families of their clients. These are printed in English as well as in Spanish for ease of use by both cultures by SuperDuper Publications out of Greenville, South Carolina. This company was founded by a speech-language pathologist who currently creates hundreds of therapy activities and resources for practicing

speech-language pathologists. SuperDuper products are extensively used by the Ball State Speech and Language Clinic. Another commonly appearing source in the manual is Bilinguistics Incorporated out of Austin, Texas. Bilinguistics was founded by two bilingual speech-language pathologists who continuously expand the available information and resources for bilingual speech therapy. One of the largest sources of this project was the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). ASHA is the credentialing association for speech-language pathologists. ASHA ensures that all speech-language pathologists have current and reliable information, providing articles and related information. Based on the reliability of the company and the popularity among practicing speech-language pathologists, each document included in the manual was carefully selected to provide a comprehensive and factual source for speech-language pathologists.

Personal clinical experiences, accompanied by my double major in Spanish, were incorporated into the planning and organization of this resource manual. This manual was also based on interviews with two practicing speech-language pathologists, as well as two bilingual educators. These school-based professionals were interviewed and asked what would be beneficial to them when working with bilingual clients and their families. Resources such as the Handy Handouts and the iPad “Apps” were helpful additions suggested by these professionals. With my limited clinical experience, the opinions of these professionals were valued and embraced as the manual was developed. In addition, personal experience of working with an English Language Learner during my first clinical semester at the Ball State Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic was also a resource. Details such as dialectal

differences, cultural dissimilarities, and establishing appropriate goals were additions to the manual based on this past clinical experience.

While completing this project, my knowledge of Spanish and the impact of the Hispanic population in everyday life expanded as a result of an Honors Colloquium class titled “La experiencia Latina,” an immersive class that sought to provide equal opportunity education for the Hispanic population in Muncie, Indiana. While completing research and meeting with various bilingual educators, the class also participated in service projects at Head Start in Muncie that included creating bilingual resources, tutoring Hispanic mothers, and teaching Spanish to the faculty and staff. Many of the teaching techniques used in the Spanish course and activities we created for Head Start, such as the bilingual backpacks, located on page 199 of the manual, were incorporated into this manual. This class provided an avenue for hands-on experiences with the bilingual population and consequently became an opportunity to incorporate what was learned from my Honors Thesis research.

Before beginning this project, becoming a bilingual speech therapist was never my career goal. Now that the project is complete and the resources are readily available when needed, my goal is to earn a Bilingual Certificate in Speech Therapy while attending graduate school over the next two years. The research and work I have completed for this manual have provided increased knowledge, confidence in my field of study, and the desire to continue this work. This project has taught me to successfully research as a speech pathologist, proficiently provide therapy to a bilingual client, write professionally, and to challenge myself in every area of academics. The skills I gained from this thesis will be there to guide me as I work in

the professional field. Not only will this resource manual be available in the Clinic's Materials room for student use, but will also serve as a resource to be used in the future while working with Spanish speaking and bilingual clients.

John Mulcahy, Associate Director of Research Integrity, was consulted and provided a list of interview questions. It was concluded that this thesis did not fall under human subjects research and no formal submission to the Institutional Review Board was needed. My advisor, Patricia Couch, M.A., SLP-CCC has reviewed and corrected every draft of this project in order to assure correctness and accuracy. Suggestions were added as needed.

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